
**Economic Development,
Agriculture & Trade Committee**

ESB 5330

Brief Description: Creating the economic development grants program.

Sponsors: Senators Shin, Rasmussen, Berkey, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Creates the Economic Development Grants Program in the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Hearing Date: 2/17/06

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

As the state's lead agency on economic development, the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (DCTED) delivers a range of economic development-related services from assisting with complex permit processes to infrastructure and business financing to marketing the state as a desirable place to live, work and/or visit. Its clients range from local municipalities looking for assistance with planning and pre-development to economic development organizations and businesses needing help in business retention or expansion efforts.

There are numerous federal and private economic development assistance programs for which state agencies and local governments and organizations are eligible to apply. Examples include the federal Rural Business Enterprise Grant, Economic Development Administration Grants, and Kellogg Foundation Economic Development Grants, etc.

Currently, the DCTED does not have a systematic process for identifying and applying for economic development grants.

Summary of Bill:

The Economic Development Grants program is created in the DCTED and must be staffed by at least one grantwriter, who may be a permanent staff member or a contractor.

The Economic Development Grants program staff must regularly review the Federal Register for grant opportunities, research projects, and demonstration projects. In addition, the staff must stay

abreast of private grant opportunities from foundations and businesses. The staff must assist local entities in attracting regional, national, and international business, tourism and sporting events. The staff must also correspond and meet with the appropriate people, including federal officials and foundation and business officials.

The Economic Development Grants program staff must keep agency directors and division heads apprised of opportunities for federal and private grant funds for economic development projects and assist state agencies in their grant-seeking efforts. The highest priority of the Economic Development Grants program shall be grant writing and grant writing assistance for projects sponsored or cosponsored by state agencies.

In order to increase the likelihood of success in grant seeking, the staff shall facilitate joint efforts between agencies and between agencies and local consortiums as well as garner political support necessary from federal and state elected officials.

Annually, the DCTED must submit a list to the Legislature of grant applications submitted, grant awards received, and the total amount of grant funds received during the previous year. The list is due by December 1 of each year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.